

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**13 OCTOBER 2005****APPROVED 10/20/2005**

At 6:10 pm the meeting was called to order by Chairman Cordes. Present were Selectmen Gene Cordes, Donald Gates Jr, and Peter Bolduc; and Town Administrator Heidi Carlson.

Selectmen reviewed the mail folder and read through the minutes from last evening.

At 6:15 pm motion was made by Bolduc and seconded by Gates to enter non-public session pursuant to NH RSA 91-A II 3 (c) to discuss a personnel matter. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Selectmen discussed a personnel matter.

At 6:30 pm motion was made by Gates and seconded by Bolduc to return to public session. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0. No decisions were made.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the minutes for 06 October and 12 October 2005. Motion was made by Bolduc and seconded by Gates to approve the minutes for 06 October 2005. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0. Motion was then made by Bolduc to approve the minutes of 12 October 2005. Gates seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the accounts payable manifest in the amount of \$15,396.68. Bolduc moved to approve it, seconded by Gates. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0 and both copies were signed.

2. The NROC meeting is scheduled for Monday October 17, 2005 at 7:00 pm in the basement meeting room. A Selectman is asked to attend the presentation. Two of the Selectmen are at another meeting that evening, and Gates is out of town.

3. Selectmen reviewed the schedule for the week of Thanksgiving. It was decided the Board would meet on Tuesday night, and that ½ a day on Wednesday would be OK. The Tax Collector will hold the same evening hours, and it is likely the Town Clerk will as well.

4. A renewal contract has been received from Raymond Ambulance for the next five years. Selectmen asked that the departments referenced in the contract (Rescue, Fire, Police) all review it and offer comments by a date certain so that the contract can be processed.

At 7:00 pm Richard Butler met with the Selectmen to discuss the full-time Planning & Zoning position. He presented a letter, which he indicated he wrote on behalf of the Zoning Board of Adjustment. As the Chairman of that Board, Butler stated that the ZBA is in favor of the full-time clerical position.

Butler also discussed the payment on the new fire truck, and the balance due from the Fire Association.

Neal Janvrin came into the meeting at 7:10 pm. He asked the Selectmen about whether they had seen the new posting from the IRS about mileage being increased for the period from September to December 2005. No one had seen it, but were aware it had increased. The Town is planning to use \$0.40 for the 2006 budget year.

Selectmen discussed with Janvrin the complaint letter from Cindy Grasso this week. Janvrin said he had gotten a subsequent complaint from Randy Grasso. The Selectmen's response

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**13 OCTOBER 2005**

letter was reviewed by Janvrin, as it encompasses several issues, including those dealt with by the Police Department.

At 7:30 pm Charles Rand came into the meeting.

Gates thanked the Chief for addressing the truck spillage on Route 107 on September 30th. A truck leaving Governor's Forest had dumped a load of rocks from the site all the way to Risloves Way.

At 7:35 pm Neal Janvrin presented the 2006 Police Department budget proposal to the Selectmen.

Janvrin began with the office account, which includes the clerical position, which Janvrin has budgeted to become full-time. He said the current clerk is handling up to 40 phone calls per day, 12 walk-ins per day, (which include everything from asking for directions to wanting to file reports). He said her daily duties include the mail, discovery for all court cases, preparation of letters, bi-weekly putting together the timesheets for payroll and A/P, special detail scheduling, the clerical part of the DARE program, alarm system file updates, business site files, subpoenas, and scheduling officers for court.

Janvrin said that department statistics to date include: 60 arrests, 186 reportable incidents, 18 warrants, 15 restraining orders, 39 accident reports, 410 summonses, and 724 warnings in the filing system.

He said he has included a telephone system update that would serve the entire building. His goal is to have the clerk answer the phone for all the safety services in the complex. He said she is currently working 30 hours per week and he has budgeted for 40, but this budget sum here does not include the benefit package.

Telephone - same service but a new telephone and voicemail system at a cost of \$5,380 (updated full replacement). Janvrin said he feels strongly enough about this that he has put the entire amount in the police department budget. He indicates that this will contain voicemail, and that he is planning to get voicemail jumping, so that if one line is busy that it will jump to the next available line.

Computers - adding \$3,875 for the investigation package on the IMC software in addition to the cost for annual maintenance, updates, and software support.

Internet service for the building is \$109 per month and is fully included in the Police budget. The Comcast service is also available to the other safety services through this connection.

Janvrin said that he used 3.5% as a cost of living increase. Janvrin said that today he checked it again and it was 3.8%. He said he uses the same time period each year, the last two quarters of the prior year and the first two quarters of the current year.

Inservice training and first aid is only up because of the cost of living increase - of these lines, 8 hours is required per year. Janvrin said he budgets for 24 hours per year per person to include firearms and first aid training. Four hours classroom and four hours range is required to qualify, but more is needed to include the night shoots, etc. Selectmen indicated their support of training as an important part of the program.

There is \$2,000 in the budget for range training, which would allow several wireless units on the range for targeting systems. Rand said that this would suit the department's needs for a long time to come, including other upgrades he would make in the future to supplement these training needs. This will run AC and DC power units. In the beginning they will plan to use

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**13 OCTOBER 2005**

generators, but at some point they may run power from the highway shed, about which they have talked with Guerwood Holmes. Janvrin said he is having eight loads of stone dust delivered to the site. Rick Butler is hauling the material and Leon Holmes Jr will place it. Janvrin got a reduced price of \$2.00 per ton from Aggregate.

Salary lines are up 3.5% plus a step raise for all personnel. Step raises are based on each individual's anniversary date. Selectmen again discussed the step raise for all personnel and will verify in prior year minutes that was the plan approved for the Police Department, different from the other departments.

Janvrin said the equipment lines are all the same, as they find this amount is covering all of their needs.

Fuel budgets are up 50% over 2005 due to the increase in fuel prices. It is unknown if even this will be enough. Janvrin said that mileage is limited per shift, and patrol is adjusted accordingly.

Tires are needed on the OHRV's this year, with some routine maintenance needed (approximately \$200 per unit). Janvrin said these units do a great job of reducing the OHRV complaints, as well as they earn money doing details on the trails.

Janvrin reminded the Board that they told him last year that they would support a warrant article to replace the blazer. The blazer needs to be plugged into a charger all the times, and is rusting out. The unit was a \$5 investment 12 years ago, and has done very well for the Town. It has not been decided what that vehicle should be.

Selectmen asked if the ACO truck could be done away with if a four-door truck type vehicle was purchased. This type of vehicle is a special use vehicle, except in certain winter weather conditions. Janvrin said if they do not buy new, he would want very close to new. Janvrin has talked with Glen Hutchins about such a vehicle, who indicated he could go to the State bid and get a cheaper vehicle, because they are more of the base models.

There was discussion about the Chevy Suburban purchased by the Rescue a few years ago, and the compatibility of it for such a use.

The Animal Control budget is up only for the wage considerations.

The last pages of the budget submission were comparisons to prior years appropriations.

Selectmen looked at the budget and looked ahead to the other personnel impacts of creating one more full-time position.

Janvrin said in defense of his view, he feels that while two part-time people are cheaper, you lose a lot in continuity. There is also a lot of "training" mode. There is also a lack of supervision at the Police Station due to the officers being on the road much of the time. Janvrin said that he needs to be able to delegate the tasks and know that the job will get done.

The overall police budget is \$376,000 Janvrin highlighted the phone system and some other updates that will affect the entire building and the other safety service departments.

Overall revenue is down due to the loss of COP's grants over time.

Janvrin said that he felt he could also make a case for another full-time officer in 2006 based on the call volume, etc, but had not included it in the budget. He said Brentwood was putting

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**13 OCTOBER 2005**

on their 6th full-time officer. Two Fremont officers were deployed again this week to help in the western part of NH with the flooding issues.

Cordes said that the capability, capacity, skill of the department has grown a lot and matured in the time we all have been working together, maturing as an organization. Yet it is still evolving due to expectations of the department and the town, and the complexities that come with growth. Cordes felt that the Board has been pretty supportive of the department through this time, and explained that the Board asking tough questions is simply them doing their due diligence. The Selectmen do appreciate the department and what the mission is. Cordes said that one issue he continues to be perplexed about is budgeting for 54 weeks of salary instead of scheduling around the holiday pay. This led to considerable discussion.

Janvrin said that the full-time employees are paid an additional two weeks to cover the 10 paid holidays. Cordes said that he feels holidays should be for people to have time off and spend with their families. Rand said that it is next to impossible to schedule a part-timer for holiday coverage.

It was clear that you cannot shut down the police department for holidays, wherein you can do that in other industry.

Selectmen asked about salary lines in respect to training as many of the full-time officers would be doing training and it would be overtime pay. Janvrin said he averages the full-timers overtime rates, averaged with the part-time wages per hour to come up with the budget numbers, and that works.

Gates said he recollected that the Town was using 3% as a cost of living thus far. There was also discussion about the step increases and how that worked for employees.

Janvrin asked if using 3% would put the employees behind, if the actual cost of living is higher? There was discussion about the cost of living and how it constantly fluctuates depending on the season and the current economy over the periods of time. Selectmen indicated their views that many people in the private sector will not even see a 3% increase. He said that the State employees got only 1% as a fiscal decision made by administration to support budgets in other areas.

It was decided that Janvrin would reconfigure the budget at 3%.

Gates questioned whether it would be worthwhile to budget for additional overtime for the current full-time staff in place instead of budgeting another full-time position. Janvrin said that everyone likes overtime, but that it can also wear out the personnel, causing an unsafe position for the officer and potentially for the general public. There continued to be emphasis on the cost of the benefits package.

Selectmen said they are working on an annual statement for employees to indicate what the cost of full-time benefits are, which add to the overall compensation of employees. This would help to make employees aware of the other costs paid on their behalf.

Janvrin said again that he does not feel we are doing enough in terms of benefits for our part-time employees. He believes that there should be some disability benefits, vacation time, etc for part-time staff.

At 8:30 pm Selectmen moved to the main hall for an open session with members of the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN

13 OCTOBER 2005

Present: Richard Butler, Ron Declercq, Charles Kimball, Charles Rand, Neal Janvrin, Kevin Zukas, Mary Wheaton, Rick Pinder, Richard Heselton, Joe Nichols, John Roderick, Joel Lennon, Kyle Murdock, Vickie Murdock, Kevin O'Callaghan, Thom Roy, Aaron Epstein, Steve Toohey, Joe Gottlich, Brett Hunter; Selectmen Cordes, Bolduc & Gates; and Heidi Carlson.

Selectmen introduced themselves to everyone who was present. By way of backdrop, Cordes explained what had happened during the budgeting process last year, in that there were a lot of questions asked about organization and level of funding as it related to training and equipment. For the Budget Committee the point of reference was that perhaps if the departments were organized differently that there would be some budgetary savings for the Town. There was a lack of understanding about what each department did and their individual equipment needs.

Based on those questions, earlier in 2005 the Board of Selectmen decided to form a committee to look at the questions, and how the departments were organized, look at the issues facing each, and the equipment, training, etc items. He said that the Committee met this summer and at the end of their research, generated a report. Copies of the report were made available.

Cordes said that the Selectmen have learned that there would likely not be not budgetary savings if the department were combined, but that there could be other benefits, including increasing the number of cross-trained people, increasing the number of people eligible for service, and that it would streamline the command structure and organizational items. Selectmen have discussed this and thought that the voters should have that information and have the opportunity to review it and make a decision about it. This meeting was set up to see what the pros and cons might be as viewed from the existing separate department.

Chief Heselton said he did not want the responsibility of it (as the leader), but that if it was the best thing for the Town that he would do his very best working with it. He feels there is a daytime response difficulty. He has seen times when there is little to no rescue response, and does not want to take on a service that the fire department could not provide, and that down the road we might be leaning toward fulltime staffing. The Town is growing, calls are increasing, and he said that people are calling for more service from the departments.

He said he understood the Committee put in a lot of time and talked to a lot of people.

Kyle Murdock said that he agreed, ultimately, we need to look at what is best for the Town and go that route. He said there is a lot going on around town about these issues, and a lot of "talk". In his opinion, a vast majority does not agree with the combination of fire and rescue, but do agree with a lot of things that have come up in the study. He agreed that cross-training is important and should be done. He said that the departments can get settled in their ways. He said it would be good for the fire department to know where all of the equipment on the rescue truck is, so that they can assist. He said he did not feel that you will have more people if they are combined. He doesn't think there will be more EMT's or more firefighters. He said there is nothing stopping the fire department members now from becoming EMS certified, and that they would be welcomed to the rescue squad.

He said that when you are short-handed there are some things that might improve on this, such as toning the fire department to bring equipment to a scene. He said a similar issue came up last month wherein rescue and the ambulance would be toned for standby on calls to the Nursing Home and Ellis School.

Murdock said that when this new policy was adopted, all of the rescue members were told that these calls were no lights, no sirens, and that there should be a minimal amount of radio communication. He said that he knew this was very likely one of the reasons the Fire Chief was hesitant to make these changes.

He said that everything in the report can be addressed, but does not have to move it toward combining the departments.

Kevin Zukas felt that with the combination there was some smoothing out of the “maybe I do want to get some training or learning more about fire or EMS”. He felt that it created a smoother transition for members looking at both sides of the service, and there would be less animosity amongst members. There is less “us” and “them” and it is one department with all of the members. It becomes one group and not two separate entities.

Zukas felt that initially you may not have the interest, but over time there is more interest generated in the cross-training and in the combined group.

Vickie Murdock asked why this wasn't done when the rescue was down to three or four people, why it is being consider now that they have made a name for themselves and built up again.

Kyle Murdock said that he did not want it to feel like he and Vickie Murdock were the only ones speaking for rescue this evening, but several of their members are not here tonight because they are in training.

Cordes said, in response to Vickie Murdock's question, that sometimes these issues are simply addressed when they are raised as issues, and in response to budgetary or other, concerns.

Kyle Murdock said that there are a lot of people on rescue who have taken this to heart, harder than they should have, he feels. He said he felt that this is telling everyone on rescue thanks for all of your years of service, but now the fire department will run it. He said that rescue has always been able to choose their own leader and now they will be told who their leader is. He said that a fire chief has no medical experience might not be beneficial to the EMS side of things.

Murdock said that the animosity is not amongst the rescue squad members themselves, but comes from outside. He stressed that there were 16 people at the last rescue meeting and they for the first time ever, had a full roster.

He explained a situation recently that spoke to the issue of rumors and what people hear and pass around. He feels the departments need to work on these kind of problems.

Gates said that if anything was done to the combining, that it was in NO way to slight any members of either organization.

Kyle Murdock said he was opposed to putting this forward as a warrant article, that if people want to get involved, they should get involved. He did not want to see this become a fight on the town meeting floor.

Ron DeClercq said he came into the meeting feeling neutral, but was getting more information on both sides. He suggested letting this sit on a back burner for another year and let the departments do some cross-training and work on other issues, to see what might come of that before making a more permanent decision.

Kyle Murdock said that he had talked to Heselton on Saturday about having a monthly department head meeting, to include the Police Chief, to keep the lines of communication open.

Joe Nichols discussed some liability issues. He said that firefighters being on a scene (with a combined department) there that there are rescue duties that they could do. He discussed some of the calls where the departments would work together. He said that there are some people he does not even know on the rescue, and would not know if they are certified to

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN

13 OCTOBER 2005

perform certain operations. For himself, he said that he wanted to maintain some medical training to help on the rescue operations (auto extrication and trauma) but did not want to do the more medical issues.

There was discussion about keeping separate associations.

Joe Gottlich said that he is one of the newer persons, having been in Town for about four years. He said he understands where Kyle is coming from, and what rescue has become over a short period of time. He said he appreciates that the rescue squad has built itself up over the time. Looking in, there is more emphasis toward a group effort and people being unified. He mentioned 9/11 and the tendency toward working together. He said there may be other ways to make it happen, but that overall somehow it is just how things go, is toward combined departments.

Gates said that some of the animosity will filter out over time, and DeClercq commented that the time in between could create even more animosity.

Kyle Murdock reiterated that the issues in the report can be addressed, that simply a dinner could help to bring the groups together and have everyone meet each other.

Charles Rand asked for other negatives (cons) for the combining of the Departments.

Vickie Murdock said that she left the fire department because they set policies and bring them to you and then they don't use them, by setting up their own rules as they see fit. She feels they don't follow their own policies if they don't suit them, that it is a clique of sorts, and that the Officers run the department, not the Chief. She said she was sorry if she was hurting people's feelings. She further talked about Chief Heselton's stated intentions to resign over the years. She feels that the department is out of control.

Kyle Murdock added that this is exactly what he does not want to come out at Town Meeting. Vickie Murdock said that they are not honest, and they turn against each other.

Vickie said these issues are not going to make it easier. She said she felt that if you are not "in" and play the game, that you are considered an outsider. She feels this atmosphere will result in losing half of the current rescue squad.

Aaron Epstein said that the chain of command is important. He referenced it to his military background, and said that Officers should be running the department, and report through the chain of command to the Chief. He said we are here for the Town of people, and we should continue to maintain that. He said that this is about finding a common goal and taking care of the townspeople.

Epstein said that one way to try it is to combine it for a year on a trial basis. If that does not work, then go back to being separate and get on with their duties.

Neal Janvrin said that he had been a study committee member, and that every department they looked at, had these animosities, and they worked through them. They found it to be more of a team effort in the end. Having a unified command system is a way to make it work.

Joe Nichols said that some problems are due to the department and the squad not being unified. He felt one such issue is the four wheeler and how it is used between the departments.

Nichols said he is also on the points committee for the fire department, and that there are some cases they look at each year where someone is just shy of points, but may be on both departments and that together they may be able to make it work.

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**13 OCTOBER 2005**

Kevin Zukas said that another advantage is that there would be less duplication of equipment.

Cordes said that the public perception is the departments are already together, given their similar locations (housing at the Safety Complex) and that it says Fremont on the truck.

Zukas said that he has one boss, and it is the Fire Chief (Epping) and that person does his reviews. This was said in response to an earlier comment about two bosses at the time when the Town had to go to full-time personnel who were cross-trained (if the departments were not one). For the record, Zukas stated he worked full-time for the Epping Fire Department (which also provides EMS/Ambulance service).

Vickie Murdock asked how the points would work. Kyle said there was no way that could be combined.

Cordes said this was certainly looking at the future, and that there were a lot of issues that would need to be worked out at such time as it happened.

Vickie Murdock said that people who were not doing the same job could not be equally compensated.

Heselton responded to his earlier intention to resign, and said that with some things not working out as he had planned, that he is going to be here for a while, and wants to continue to do it because he enjoys it. He referred back to the Selectmen's consideration for him, that he delegate more to the Board of Officers. He said that he trusts and respects the decisions of the officers, and if he can't, then he lets them know that. He said he does not like to think that the department is out of control.

Gates said that the departments are volunteer, and that duties do have to be delegated.

Kyle Murdock said that there are valid points brought up in the report, and asked again if they could work on fixing these issues and put the combining issues aside for a time. If it is merged now, it is forcing the issues, whereas if they wait and work on them during the next year, it may be less problematic. He suggested forming a committee of members from each group to look at the issues (perhaps 3 fire and 3 rescue).

Kyle asked the Selectmen, on behalf of the body of rescue, to allow the departments to work together this year to address the issues.

Joe Gottlich said that another issue found by the Committee was that if combined, the call volume is higher, and there is an increased chance of eligibility for state and government grants.

Kevin O'Callaghan asked if there was going to be a mediator if these meetings were to get heated. Cordes said that the department heads could do that, or perhaps an outside third party, like a police officer.

Janvrin said that at a recent meeting between him, Hesleton and Kyle Murdock; they decided they were going to sit down and at least monthly to meet, discuss issues, and try and maintain better communication.

The Selectmen ended the meeting by saying that the matter was still being considered, and thanked everyone for attending and sharing their thoughts on the matter.

The meeting concluded at 9:40 pm.

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**13 OCTOBER 2005****OLD BUSINESS CONTINUED**

2. CTAP – follow up information was sent to Kevin Herrmann, and another call needs to be made to him to see if he is interested in the position.

3. Ferwerda follow-up from last week – the cease & desist was lifted upon receipt of the dust control plan and the letter of credit for the reclamation of the project. Thom Roy had verified that the items reviewed during the last meeting with Ferwerda had been addressed. The one remaining item the Town considers unresolved in the drainage issue still affecting the Neistorowich property on Main Street.

A letter was issued from the Planning Board last night which the Board reviewed as well.

4. Selectmen directed that a memorandum be prepared to Mary Anderson with the information received from Monica Gordon regarding the revaluation.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

4. Selectmen reviewed and signed outgoing correspondence to Mark Lagasse re: wetland violations at parcel 2-141; a letter to Cindy Grasso regarding Beede Hill Road; a letter to Scott LaPointe regarding the current use penalty tax issued for the CoppHutch subdivision lots. LaPointe's letter will be forwarded to Scott Marsh for consideration as well.

5. Selectmen all read through the tax rate press release and the 2005 abatement information sheet. Changes were made as appropriate. The press release will be done as a tax bill mailer. Both documents will be put on the Town's website and will be included in the November newsletter.

6. Selectmen previewed a couple of November Newsletter items to be sure they were appropriate for the edition.

7. No action taken on a bond release request from Fran McCarthy as Guerwood Holmes is meeting with the engineer next week, and there are still a couple of items to be completed. Additionally the amount of the maintenance bond needs to be determined.

8. Selectmen received a letter and request to beaver trap on the Glen Oakes land, indicating the Town was listed as the property owner. Selectmen indicated a response they would draft to Mr Parsons, including the fact that the Town does not yet own these parcels. The Board would only authorize trapping if they perceived a problem with overpopulation.

NEXT WEEK

1. No budget worksession was scheduled as not all three members are available. The Board will try and hold the next worksession on Wednesday October 26th.

2. The Budget Committee meets on Monday October 24th. Budgets as approved last night will go forward to the Committee.

3. Selectmen have a meeting posted for Monday October 17th to view the new Sanborn Regional High School Construction site. It is still unknown if Bolduc can attend. Cordes is planning to be there.

The next regular Board meeting will be held on Thursday October 20, 2005 at 6:00 pm.

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**13 OCTOBER 2005**

With no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Bolduc and seconded by Gates at 11:15 pm to adjourn the meeting. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator